

**Testimony on House Bill – Favorable  
HB 1018 – Immigration Detention Facility Standards  
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee Hearing  
February 12, 2026**

Dear Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, Delegate Stewart, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to urge you to issue a **favorable report on HB 1018**.

Washington County is currently allowing ICE to convert a warehouse into an immigration detention facility. If the State of Maryland is unable to stop this process, then it is absolutely essential that we establish clear, enforceable minimum standards for any such facility operating within our borders. HB 1018 provides those critical protections. This bill:

- Establishes minimum safety and living standards.
- Ensures accountability and transparency.
- Empowers meaningful state oversight.
- Creates an enforcement mechanism.
- And protects local and state resources.

These safeguards are long overdue. The federal government has deliberately allowed conditions in immigration detention facilities to become inhumane and degrading. This is not accidental—it is a strategy meant to pressure people into self-deportation by making detention unbearable.

Maryland must not be complicit in this approach. Before a detention facility is allowed to operate in our communities, we must require strong safeguards that protect human dignity, public resources, and the values of this state. HB 1018 is a responsible and necessary step to ensure that Maryland upholds its values, protects vulnerable people, and asserts appropriate state oversight.

This issue is very personal to me because my late father in law was wrongfully held in a re-education, prisoner of war camp for his political and religious beliefs in Vietnam. He then sought asylum in America for those very pro-democracy beliefs and Catholic faith. Considering the civil rights and freedoms which our Constitution grants to all *persons*, I feel very strongly that we should not have roving patrols kidnapping and secreting community members, disregarding their Constitutional Rights and due process, and concentrating them into camps on the basis of racial profiling, languages spoken, or quotas issued.

I also want to be clear that I do not believe individuals who are not violent criminals should be detained at all. The enormous amount of money being spent on immigration detention does nothing to improve public safety and diverts resources away from what Marylanders actually need. This issue is not about crime—it is about immigration policy and human rights.

Vote **favorable on HB 1018** and allow this bill to move forward to the full House for consideration. Thank you for your time and for your service.

Sincerely,

Jean Montgomery

District 14 Voter.

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